

## **Minutes of the Amherst Public Arts Commission, May 3, 2012**

First floor meeting room in the Amherst Town Hall, 3:10 p.m.

Present: Terry Rooney (Chair), Rosario Gaddier, Bonnie Isman, Randa Nachbar, Jenny Lind

Absent: Rachel Hankinson, Jim Wald (Select Board liaison)

Jenny shared the news that APAC member Diane Westfall passed away yesterday. Diane was an enthusiastic supporter of the public arts, a great committee contributor, and she will be greatly missed.

**Little White House Project.** Peter Krasznegewicz's Little White Houses are in place along Main Street and at the Dickinson Museum and Jones Library, creating lots of public interest. Terry reported that the installations went well, except for lack of a written agreement regarding liability, etc. which is still waiting for action by Town Counsel. Town Manager office staff is working on this. News articles in major papers will highlight the Amherst exhibit, and the artist has created a book documenting the houses which is being sold at the Emily Dickinson Museum. Terry is pleased that APAC is getting such a big bang for zero bucks!

**Emily's Rhapsody.** Terry is selecting pieces of children's artwork, inspired by Dickinson's poetry, for display at the museum. Due to difficulties communicating with some art teachers, not all schools will be represented in the May exhibit. She has about 50 submissions so far, and expects many more. We agreed to set up a database of works for Emily's Rhapsody. Rosario knows of web-based "drop box" software that will help with this project, and he volunteered to take photos of each piece. Randa and Jenny will enter the data from each application needed to create gallery labels. Pieces are currently stored at the ED Museum, Hope and Feathers gallery, and Terry's house.

**Town Hall art exhibits.** The original artist selected to exhibit April-June at Town Hall withdrew since her work was on display elsewhere. Terry contacted art teacher and print maker Sheryl Jaffee who will hang her work on Friday. Bonnie arranged for Town Hall custodians John Imbimbo and Mary Decker to re-paint the exhibit areas in April, so it looks much improved. Sheryl's exhibit will run through July. Terry will arrange for a shorter exhibit in August-September; the Biennial will use the space in October-November. There will be a new call for artists to show work at Town Hall beginning in December 2012 through 2013. We discussed ways of doing an email blast.

**Amherst Arts Center.** Town Manager Musante told Terry that Amherst Media is very likely to use the East Street School for their offices and classes. Since the building will not be available to APAC, all planning for the Amherst Arts Center has stopped.

**Amherst Biennial 2012 update.** Lots going on! Terry (mostly!) and Bonnie completed the Adams Art Program grant application to the Mass. Cultural Council for \$15,000, to be matched with local funds and in-kind contributions. The main purpose of the grant would be to pay for art installation work, gallery sitters, curators, catalog designer, and marketing. Among the many requirements of the grant application, Terry obtained three letters of recommendation: from the

Town Manager, the director of the Chamber of Commerce, and an artist. If successful, the grant would begin July 1. Terry and Bonnie met with Doug Burr at Florence Savings Bank in April, and FSB will be one of our sponsors (amount tba).

So far, about 80 applications accompanied by \$2,000 in fees have been received from artists. The deadline was extended to May 7, in order to accommodate last minute deliveries. Selection of artists will begin in May with Liz Barker (Amherst College Mead Art Museum), Terry, and Loretta Yarlow (UMass Museum of Contemporary Art).

Terry has gotten the following sites to participate: Amherst College Frost Library gallery and the lawn in front of Mead Art Museum; University of Mass Hampden Gallery (in Southwest), projection space on the Fine Arts Center, and a sound installation using Old Chapel; Eric Carle Museum next to their Kids Art Workshop; the Emily Dickinson Museum; atrium of the Jones Library; Bank of America ATM lobby; the vacant Michelson's gallery building; Hope & Feathers Gallery; Freedom Trails gallery; and Town Hall. Terry will contact other sites depending on the artwork chosen for exhibit. Nacul Center is not available due to parking problems with their neighbors, and East Street School will not be available.

As part of this year's Biennial, Terry wants to include "yarn bombing", a new trend of knitting and fiber arts in public places. She asked Susan Loring Wells and Bonnie to work on this, and Jenny suggested Amy Wasserman from Pelham. The goal will be to have 12-20 knitters involved in yarn bombing in various public places during the Biennial.

**Kendrick Park.** The effort to keep Matt Johnson's Portal sculpture in Kendrick Park is getting results. An anonymous donor gave \$500, and the new Business Improvement District has pledged \$3,500, thanks to an appeal by Town Manager Musante. The BID support will be announced sometime this summer. The artist will allow APAC three years to raise the full \$10,000 to purchase the sculpture for the Town. Rosario suggested that Terry check with the artist so we can reproduce and sell images of the Portal in fund-raising.

**Minutes.** Approved minutes of March, 16, 2012

Adjourned, 5:15 p.m.

Submitted by Bonnie Isman